

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2739

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 1344

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SL

SUBJECT: STEVENS VISIT TO LIBYA

REF: FREETOWN 2863

1. OUTWARD INDICATIONS ARE THAT STEVENS VISIT WAS NOT SUCCESSFUL IN ITS AIM OF CONVINCING THE LIBYANS TO PART WITH ANY SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNTS OF CASH, BUT IT MAY HAVE SOFTENED THEM UP FOR FUTURE APPROACHES. TECHNICAL, AGRICULTURAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED BY THE TWO SIDES (FOR THE LIBYANS BY THE MINISTER OF TREASURY, WHICH MAKES THE CONTEXT CLEAR), BUT THEY DO NOT APPEAR TO BE ANYTHING MORE THAN VAGUE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS, AGREEMENTS IN PRINCIPLE TO AGREE. AMBASSADORS ARE TO BE EXCHANGED AND RELATIONS STRENGTHENED.

2. WE ASSUME EMBASSY FREETOWN HAS A TEXT OF THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE. IT CONTAINS SOME IMMODEST AND INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE ABOUT QADHAFI, WHOM PRESIDENT STEVENS WAS TAKEN TO BENGHAZI TO MEET (LIKE THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND, QADHAFI DOES NOT MEET HEADS OF STATE AT AIRPORTS), AND THE STATEMENT THAT "THE TWO SIDES STRESSED THEIR PRINCIPLED STAND BY THE SIDE OF THE PALESTINIAN ARAB PEOPLE THAT IT MAY ACHIEVE ITS GOALS OF COMPLETE LIBERATION

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OF THE LAND OF PALESTINE FROM THE ATTACK OF RACIST

ZIONISTS". FOR THE LIBYANS, COMPLETE LIBERATION AND THE REST OF IT MEANS THE DESTRUCTION OF ISRAEL. OBVIOUSLY ONE THING THE TWO SIDES TALKED ABOUT WAS SIERRA LEONE'S ABSTENTION ON THE ZIONISM-RACISM VOTE IN THE UN. IT IS SAFE TO ASSUME THAT THE LIBYANS WILL BRING UP THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE ON PALESTINE THE NEXT TIME AN ANTI-ISRAEL VOTE COMES UP IN THE UN, AND THAT IF SIERRA LEONE IS TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF SUBSTANTIAL LIBYAN FINANCIAL HELP IT WILL HAVE TO VOTE BETTER ON THESE QUESTIONS IN THE FUTURE.

3. ALTHOUGH THERE WERE NO SIGNS THAT THE VISIT WAS OTHER THAN CORDIAL, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SELF-CONSCIOUS LIBYAN STYLE AND PRESIDENT STEVEN'S RELAXED INFORMALITY WAS STRIKING. PRESIDENT STEVENS MADE A HIT WITH THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WHEN AT THE BANQUET IN HIS HONOR HE REPLIED TO PRIME MINISTER JALLUD'S STIFF AND FORMAL SPEECH WITH SOME BREEZY AFTER DINNER REMARKS PRECEDED BY A FRIENDLY JOKE ABOUT AN AMERICAN POLITICIAN WHO PROMISED HIS CONSTITUENTS TO LOOK AFTER THEIR INTERESTS WITH ZEAL, "AND IF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE GETS IN MY WAY, GOD HELP THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE". THE LIBYANS PRESENT OBVIOUSLY DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF HIM.
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